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The Inspector.

NO. IV.

SOME people have a strange aversion to travel in a mail-coach, now to me it is the most pleasant mode of conveyance I can imagine, and therefore I use it as frequently as possible in my peregrinations. The variety of character which is there sometimes to be met with, is, in my opinion, a sufficient compensation for any trifling inconvenience that may attend it. True, indeed, we may sometimes suffer under the effusions of vanity, and perhaps meet with impertinence, but a little stock of philosophy will enable us to endure the one, and even the affectation of spirit will often be found sufficient to repress the other. In the mean time some instruction, or entertainment may be picked up, which, if we are so disposed, may be turned to advantage. The last trip I took in one of the abovementioned vehicles, was from Derry to Colerain; the company consisted of a gay, spruce recruiting-officer, an elderly grave-looking gentleman, and myself. We took our seats in solemn silence, the coach went off, and we continued to preserve a wonderful degree of taciturnity. Conversation at length commenced, as conversations in such cases generally do, with some profound remarks on the weather, the deepness of the roads, the darkness of the nights, the length of the stages, and the comfort of being *inside* passengers. Then the news of the day, the great and important victories gained over Bonaparte, just announced in Derry, and by which he is reduced to despair; the magnanimity of our allies, the firmness of Alexander, courage of the Crown Prince, heroism of General Stewart, &c. On these

subjects the Captain shone with great splendour. He appeared to be as well acquainted with the marshalling of an army, marching and countermarching, mining and countermining, storming and sapping, advancing and retreating, and with all the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war," as any hero of ancient or of modern times. Domestic occurrences next became the topic, and the conduct and expectations of the Catholics were amply discussed, and here again the Captain shone away. He proved, greatly to his own satisfaction at least, the absurdity of government in listening to their claims, loudly condemned their presumption, regretted they had obtained so much, and fondly hoped to see them yet completely humbled. "Look at their conduct," said he, "since they began to entertain hopes of emancipation, they demand what they call their *rights*, and assume a tone and manner altogether unbecoming *petitioners*. They presume to condemn the measures of some high in the confidence of government, and treat them with a degree of disrespect altogether unpardonable. They wish to be ushered into Parliament, they want the command of our fleets and armies. I don't doubt them, but grant them this, would they be satisfied? No, the introduction of popery would then be the object; aye there's the rub, our glorious establishment would be overturned, church and state would undergo a complete revolution, the Pope would regain his ancient authority, and Protestantism would be no more. What can be their design in forming themselves into societies? What are we to conclude from their determined opposition to Orangemen? Why, we are to conclude that they hate Orangemen, and of course Protestants. Of this their conduct on many occasions is a sufficient proof;

our fairs and markets are converted into scenes of tumult and blood by these cursed Ribbonmen, whilst a true and loyal Orangeman dare scarcely hold up his head. In Garvaghy, for instance, there was a pretty piece of work; had the Orangemen been armed what would have been the consequence? Why they would have been murdered every man; but they were paid home there; pity every one of them had not been shot. What do the vagabonds want, their religion is tolerated, they may go to mass, go and count their beads as often as they please, nobody hinders them, nobody interferes. Set them up with seats in Parliament; trust them with our fleets and armies indeed." Much more in the same style, and to the same tune, did the voluble warrior utter, and stopped not until gasping for breath. During the Captain's harangue I perceived strong symptoms of uneasiness in the old gentleman, he sat fidgeting on his seat, frequently took snuff, and at length when the man of scarlet came to a full stop, he cleared his pipes and thus replied.

"It is surprising that in an age of refinement, when we boast so much of the advances we are daily making in every species of improvement, that prejudice still appears obstinately to maintain its ground. The truth is, we quietly imbibe the principles and opinions of our fathers, or instructors, never calling in question their propriety, and under the influence of these we jog on in the same track, without consulting our own understandings. This is the most favourable cause I can assign, for conduct which I sometimes see, and sentiments which I often hear; and in the present case I will not suppose interest has any thing to do with the matter, for I wish to think charitably of all. You, sir, (turning

to the soldier,) warmly condemn the Catholics for claiming as a *right*, what you seem to suppose, if granted, would be a special *favour*; now, in my opinion, they should never give up the idea that it is really, and bona fide a *right*. Every subject who contributes to the support of the government under which he lives, has, I think, a just *right* to share in all the advantages which that government can bestow, and to which he can honourably attain; his religious creed should not be taken into consideration: for this he is not accountable to any earthly power, it lies altogether between him and his God. If then in pursuit of what he considers to be his *just right*, he meets with opposition and disappointment, if he hears those in power raise the war-whoop, and encourage their adherents to join in the cry, if every art is tried, and every exertion made to render their efforts unavailing and fruitless, surely it is natural for him at least to express his feelings in strong and energetic language, and when the passions are inflamed by provocation, it is not easy to suppress invective against those who have injured us. Grant now that the Catholics were eligible to sit in Parliament, and to command fleets and armies, I confess I cannot see any danger that would result from such eligibility. The crown is the fountain of honour and emolument, and while men can be influenced by the love of these, it would not be an easy matter to snatch it from the King's head. But suppose all our Irish representatives were zealous and devoted Catholics, yet what is Ireland in the scale of representation? A feather blown about by the breath of the English minister; some notice is taken of us indeed when supplies for the army are to be raised, and additional taxes levied, but in other respects we lie "unnoticed

and unknown." The appointment of our commanders rests entirely with his Majesty, and he will not, at least he should not, appoint any to such situations, on whose courage, fidelity and affection, he cannot securely depend. While, then, we have a Protestant King on the throne, while he has the filling up of all vacant places in the government, while he is the source of so much emolument, power and dignity, the cabinet may be filled with Catholics, these Catholics may be anxious for the introduction of popery, (which I am far from supposing would be the case,) yet our glorious establishment, as you call it, would not be overturned, nor need we be afraid of any revolution in church or in state. You seem to lay great stress on the evil tendency of those associations into which some of the lowest order of Catholics are said to have formed themselves under the appellation of Ribbonmen. I certainly am a decided enemy to such associations; but what is their origin? Your beloved loyal Orangemen certainly set them the example. They hold lodges from which Catholics are excluded; they in turn establish opposition societies; the designs of the one are unknown to the other; sentiments and intentions are imputed to both, which perhaps they never entertained: thus is enmity excited, but that enmity I am convinced is mutual. You unfortunately mentioned Garvagh, and seemed highly pleased that the affair there took the turn it did; it is painful to recur to such transactions, but why were the Orangemen provided with fire-arms? They heard that a number of people calling themselves Ribbon-men, or rather whom they called Ribbonmen, would be in the fair, and that their intentions towards them were hostile. Oh, ho! said the Orangemen, we'll be pre-

pared for them; we'll give them a reception they little think of; we'll provide ourselves with arms and ammunition. They did so, and thus an affray which otherwise might have ended in a few broken heads, terminated in dangerous wounds, and in immediate death. Orangemen may be loyal, and I suppose they are, according to their own meaning of the word, but what good consequences have resulted from their loyalty? What benefits have they conferred on their country? Have they promoted the peace and tranquillity of society? Have they co-operated with its laws in suppressing violence and outrage? (the old gentleman grew warm.) No; under the specious pretence of loyalty, they have sown the seeds of discord, kindled the flame of animosity, and still keep alive the destructive fire by their frequent meetings, and insulting processions: we may thank them for the tumults and bloodshed which disgrace our land, and they have the satisfaction of hearing their loyalty proclaimed in the cries of mothers whose sons they have slaughtered, and in the groans of the widow and the fatherless. It is natural, perfectly natural, that the Catholics should be galled and irritated on beholding the Orangemen march through the country, and parading through the villages with all the insignia of their order, colours and cockades, fifes and drums, guns, swords and pistols, rending the air with acclamations, and stunning the ear with clamours of triumph."

It is hard to tell where the old gentleman would have ended, had we not, fortunately or unfortunately I cannot tell which, arrived at our journey's end: the company separated, and the Captain strutted off without deigning to cast even a farewell look at his grey-headed antagonist.